(b) Only one post of Director in the Junior Administrative Grade of Indian Postal Service Group 'A' in the scale of pay of Rupees 3700—5000/- was created for the Automatic Integrated Mail Processing Centre at Bombay, with effect from 1-3-93.

Introduction of sorting machines

4509. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have introduced Sorting machines in cities; and

(b) what are the reasons for import and installation of sorting machines, while sufficient manpower is available in this country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir. Two automatic letter Sorting machines have been installed at Bombay which went into stream in April 1993 and two more letter sorting machines are being installed at Madras Airport Sorting Office during the current year.

(b) The volume of mail in the country, particularly in the major urban centres, is increasing annually at a rate of 4 per cent to 5 per cent giving rise to requirements of additional manpower, space and equipment. The mannual process requires multiple handling of every letter resulting in slow productivity. In addition, employment of an increasnig work-force brings in its wake problems of shortage of accommodation and other management problems. It is also difficult to provide the ideal work environment for too large a work-force. Further, growth of population in the major urban centres and consequential increase in business and other activities, have given rise to traffic congestion and other problems during the peak hours resulting in slower movement of mails from the city to the identified points for processing. Since transmission of mails is made through available air and surface transport, the overall time available for processing the mails has been decreasing.

The alternative method to cope with this situation and provide an efficient mail processing system is to adopt mechanisation which enables sorting of a such larger volume of mail within a shorter period of time and with greater accuracy. Adoption of modern technology in the area of mail processing has also upgraded work environment which proivdes greater motivation for the employees.

Introduction of machine has not resulted in retrenchment of any staff. While the work process has become more efficient and accurate, the available work-force is benig deployed more effectively in other areas where the increasing work-load is straining the manual system. The letter sorting machines have been imported because these are not indigenously available.

Introduction of Computerised Sorting Machines

4510. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to irregular and inordinate delays postal services have caused shifting of business to the private courier services;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the postal services have planned to use computerised sorting machines; if so, the number of machines and locations at which these machines are installed;

(c) whether the efficiency of the machine is comparable with manual sorting; if so, how does the machines compares with man hours; and

(d) whether the postal stationeries such as post cards; inland envelopes; etc. are designed to the specifications required by the machine?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No; Sir. There is no indication that mail has